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ABSTRACT

This collection of materials is designed to assist Indiana educators, administrators, and communities with the textbook selection process. Criteria for making such selections is outlined in the following articles: (1) "Laws, Rules, and Guidelines for Teaching Social Studies in Indiana" (Victor A. Smith); (2) "Indiana's Recommended Social Studies Curriculum" (Mary Fortney); (3) "Social Studies Textbook Adoption: Rationale, Procedures, and Interpretation" (James L. Barth); (4) "State-Wide Review of Textbooks" (Mary Fortney); (5) "Indiana State Textbook Adoption System, Social Studies, Textbook Evaluation Criteria, 1990"; (6) "Textbook Evaluation: The Supervisor's Perspective" (Mary Fortney); (7) "A Department Chair's Perspective" (William C. Clarke); and (8) "What Teachers Consider in Textbook Selection" (Evelyn R. Holt). Additional information is provided on readability formulas and policies/procedures for textbook adoption, as well as worksheets for use in reviewing textbooks during the selection process. The document also contains a statement on academic freedom, brief guidelines for controversial issues, and a statement on the goal of social studies education. (NL)

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INDIANA COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES

INTRODUCTION

The Indiana Council for the Social Studies has collected a variety of materials to help educators with the textbook selection process. These materials are not all-inclusive, nor should this compilation of materials be considered an endorsement of any of them. They are simply a springboard to assist you in determining the criteria of selection for your individual program.

ICSS would like to extend its thanks to the many contributors to this booklet. It is our hope that you, the consumer, will find the materials valuable.

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A STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Academic freedom for all teachers, and especially teachers of social studies, is essential to the realization of democratic goals. As those given a special charge to prepare students for the problem-solving and decision-making skills required for democratic self-government, social studies teachers require academic freedom.

Academic freedom is not the right to do or say as one pleases in the classroom, as some believe. It is rather the freedom for teachers and students to select appropriate topics, to inquire into them objectively and completely, and to reach whatever conclusions seem reasonable. This not only implies the freedom to study relevant subjects, but also implies freedom from -- that is, freedom from intimidation or threat, from whatever source, at whatever level. There is ample reason to believe that social studies education would be more relevant, enlightening, and interesting as well as of inestimably greater benefit to the citizenry, if teachers and students were able to proceed unhindered by covert or over threats of censorship.

It is therefore incumbent upon all social studies teachers to express their disapproval, in the strongest terms, of academic censorship and disregard for teachers' academic freedom -- a freedom which in Indiana is often protected by written agreements protecting teachers' due process. We believe that in addition to acquiring the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, students have a right to be confronted with problems and issues inherent in a democratic, pluralistic society -- not for the purpose of converting them to a ideology, but in order to help them acquire the skills of decision-making. To be exposed to ideas, not only in a social studies or literature class but throughout the curriculum, is inherent in a democratic school system.

-- Adopted, ICSS Board of Directors, 1979

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GUIDELINES FOR CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Freedom of inquiry needs to be balanced by professional responsibility. The following guidelines are drawn from previous court decisions as well as the judgment of the social studies profession.

1. Teachers need to be prepared with a thoughtful rationale that defends the topics and methods selected.

2. Teachers need to be able to relate the controversial issue to the subject being taught.

3. Teachers need to be clear in their purposes -- to stimulate critical thinking and decision-making rather than to persuade students of a particular point of view.

4. Teachers should recognize their right to state their opinions, and the provision that students recognize that a given opinion is his/her own opinion and that students are not expected to embrace that point of view.

5. Teachers need to ensure that exposure to an examination of all points of view are related to the issue.

6. The selection of the topic needs to be justified in terms of the age and maturity level of the students.

7. Teachers need to be informed about the topic under consideration.

THE GOAL OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

The goal of social studies education is the development of responsible citizenship based upon thinking and decision-making skills which allow students to:

A. gain knowledge;
B. process information;
C. consider the importance of values and beliefs;
D. actively participate as citizens of a democracy.

Gaining knowledge implies not just the acquiring of facts and information, but knowing where and how to find information and how to accurately record information (research and study skills). Students who are able to gain knowledge do not just passively receive information. They actively seek out data and ideas from a variety of sources.

The processing of information means the interpretation and application of knowledge to life situations. Students who are able to process information are able to communicate data and ideas in various forms. They are able to explain the relationships between factors and to use data to find solutions to problems. They are able to separate complex ideas or bodies of information into component parts and to identify organizational principles. They are able to combine ideas and information to create something that is new - a plan, a presentation, a solution - and to communicate these insights to others.

Ultimately, the development of thinking and decision-making skills should inform responsible social participation. The consideration of values and beliefs is essential to the decision-making process. This means that students should be able to evaluate information and to make judgments. They should be able to weigh the consequences of alternative solutions and courses of action and to make choices or decisions.

By necessity, the making of choices and decisions takes place in a social context. Responsible citizens must realize how their decisions and actions affect other individuals and the general welfare. Responsible citizenship involves gathering information, thinking critically, and exercising judgment regarding social and political issues. In order for students to develop citizenship skills, they must be provided with opportunities to practice and participate in the democratic process in ways that are suitable for their ages and levels of development. Through such participation, students will not only acquire citizenship skills but develop the commitment to apply those skills in making civic decisions.

FOUNDATION PROFICIENCY STATEMENTS - SOCIAL STUDIES

The goal of social studies education is the development of responsible citizenship based upon thinking and decision-making skills which allow students to:

A. gain knowledge;
B. process information;
C. consider the importance of values and beliefs;
D. actively participate in a democratic society.

To achieve the goal of citizenship education, students in Indiana schools will be provided learning experiences in social studies which allow them to:

1. assess how the people, events, and decisions of the past influence the present and future.

2. describe the geographical patterns and interrelationships of the major physical and cultural features on the earth's surface.

3. analyze past and present political structures in order to make rational choices as participating citizens in a democratic society.

4. analyze the interaction of people and institutions in economic systems.

5. investigate a range of world nations and cultures in terms of their diversity, commonalities, and interrelationships.

6. examine the patterns and interactions of individual and group behavior.

7. analyze current issues and hypothesize about their impact upon the present and the future.

8. draw conclusions or make decisions based on relevant data derived from a variety of sources.

9. develop a reasoned commitment to those civic values needed to function responsibly in a democratic society.

NOTE: For specific grade level proficiencies, please see the Social Studies Proficiency Guide.

LAWS, RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING SOCIAL STUDIES IN INDIANA

Victor A. Smith
Indianapolis Public Schools

Introduction

During the past decade, states have assumed an increasingly more influential role in education. It is essential for social studies teachers in Indiana to understand the state system which governs their profession so that they can participate in decisions which affect them. However, so complex and numerous are the state legal bodies and agencies which make and interpret educational decisions that the process is difficult to identify.

A wave of educational change has influenced every state in recent years. In Indiana alterations have been made not only in what is to be done in schools but also in the legal structure charged with deciding what is to be done. Structural changes have been made in areas of state governance of education that had not been touched for 40 years.

In order to sort out the changes and their relationship to the teaching of social studies, this section addresses three levels of decision making: laws, rules and guidelines. The decision making bodies and their decisions about social studies are addressed in this framework.

Laws Related to Social Studies

Laws are passed by the General Assembly and signed by the Governor. Four areas of law which directly affect social studies are those related to curriculum, textbook adoption, certification, and state testing.

1. Curriculum. Relatively few laws which directly prescribe the curriculum have been passed. The General Assembly has by tradition left curriculum decisions to the State Board of Education, discussed below in the section called Rules Related to Social Studies. A few laws, however, directly influence the social studies program and are noted here.

One example is Indiana Code 20-10.1-4-3:

System of Government-American History.

> Each public and nonpublic high school shall provide within the two (2) weeks preceding each general election

for all students in each of grades six (6) through twelve (12) five (5) full recitation periods of class discussion concerning the system of government in Indiana and in the United States, methods of voting, party structures, election laws, and the responsibilities of citizenship participation in government and in elections.

No one may receive a high school diploma unless he has completed a two (2) semester course in American history.

This is the legal basis for both the mandated election study which occurs every two years and for the requirement of United States History for high school graduation.

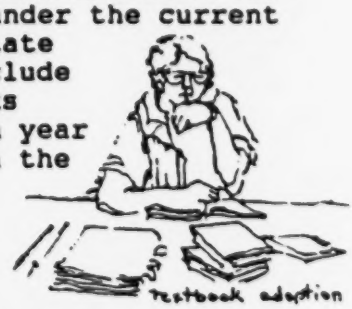
Another example is Indiana Code 20-10.1-4-2:

Constitution-Interdisciplinary Courses. Each public and nonpublic high school shall provide a required course, of not less than one (1) year of school work, in the historical, political, civic, sociological, economic, and philosophical aspects of the constitutions of Indiana and of the United States. The commission on general education shall prescribe this course and its appropriate outlines; the commission on textbook adoptions shall adopt the necessary textbooks for uniform instruction.

No high school student may receive a diploma unless he has successfully completed this interdisciplinary course. (IC 1971, 20-10.1-4-2, as added by Acts 1975, P.L. 240, Article 1, p. 1289.)

This law is the basis by which the State Board of Education (formerly the Commission on General Education) requires United States Government and one other elective related to citizenship for graduation.

2. Texts. The textbook adoption system was revamped by the 1984 General Assembly. Under the revised system, social studies textbooks are selected every six years from a list adopted by the State Board of Education. Instead of listing a maximum of seven books per category as provided by the old law, under the current law the list may include as many books as the State Board deems satisfactory. Other new changes include provisions that local districts can readopt books currently in use and can submit by May 15th each year a waiver request to adopt a book which is not on the state list. (See also Barth, "Social Studies Textbook Adoption: Rationale, Procedures and Interpretation," in a section that follows.)



3. Certification. The 1984 General Assembly made basic legislative changes which affect certification. First, the law

which mandated a masters degree for renewal of certification was changed. Two optional certification renewal patterns were adopted in rules. If a masters degree is used to renew a license, it must by law include at least 18 semester hours in the applicant's teaching areas. A license may also be renewed by obtaining 6 semester hours of credit every 5 years in the teaching area or in education. In addition, the legislature enacted a requirement that prospective teachers pass a competency test in their teaching field in order to receive initial certification. This test has been given to all applicants for certification since June 30, 1985.

4. State Testing. The 1987 General Assembly established the Indiana statewide testing for educational progress (ISTEP) program as part of Governor Robert Orr's "A Plus Program" of educational legislation. Under the law, ISTEP tests are to be based on educational proficiency statements, defined as "statements developed by the department . . . indicating the skills and knowledge base expected of a student for a particular subject area." (IC 20-10.1-16-1) Social Studies is included in this process by Indiana Code 20-10.1-16-6:

> Educational proficiency statements
>
> (a) The department shall develop educational proficiency statements for the following subject areas:
>
> 1. English/language arts.
> 2. Mathematics.
> 3. Social Studies.
> 4. Science.
> 5. Other subject areas as determined by the department.
>
> (b) The department shall revise and update the educational proficiency statements as needed. (As added by P.L. 390-1987 (ss), Sec. 24.)

Social studies testing was established by the law without a link to statewide achievement standards, in contrast to mathematics and English/language arts. This is found in Indiana Code 20-10.1-17-3:

> Adoption of standards; subject areas for testing
>
> (a) The board shall adopt state achievement standards for mathematics and English/language arts for grades 1 through 8. ISTEP program testing shall be administered in the following subject areas:
>
> 1. English/language arts.
> 2. Mathematics.
> 3. Social studies.
> 4. Science.

These laws established the first statewide social studies testing in Indiana's educational history.

Rules Related to Social Studies

Rules are adopted through a process called promulgation. After filing legal notices of proposed changes and hearings, the State Board of Education can adopt rules subject to review by the Attorney General and the Governor's signature.

The State Board of Education was itself reorganized according to legislation taking effect on July 1, 1984. Since then, the State Board of Education has been composed of 10 members appointed by the Governor and chaired by the elected State Superintendent as the eleventh member.

By tradition, the General Assembly in Indiana has left the bulk of educational policy-making to the State Board of Education. Because of this, the real framework for social studies teaching is affected more by the rules and decisions of the State Board than by those of the legislature. These rules are often confused with laws. While they are technically not laws, they are viewed as having the force of law. This is because schools which do not follow State Board rules can be decommissioned by the State Board.

Rules of the State Board--sometimes called Indiana Administrative Code or IAC--directly influence the social studies program in the following areas:

1. Graduation Requirements--Of the minimum of 38 credits required for graduation, 22 are mandated in specific subjects. Four credits in social studies are required. These are explained in 510 IAC 9-2-3.1, as follows:

> The social studies requirements shall include two (2) credits in U.S. History and two (2) credits in social studies courses relating to citizenship of which one (1) credit is to be in U.S. Government.

These requirements were not altered in the 1984 changes which increased graduation requirements.

2. Approved High School Courses--The titles of all approved courses for Grades 9-12 are established in rules of the State Board. The current list of approved course titles is as follows:

> Africa Studies, Law Education, Anthropology, Modern World Civilizations, Applied Economics, Political Science, Asian Studies, Psychology, Citizenship/Civics, Sociology, Consumer Economics, State and Local Government, Current

Problems/Issues/Events, Topics in History, Economics, United States Government, Ethnic Studies, United States History, Indiana Studies, Urban Affairs, International Relations, World Geography, Introduction to Social Science, World History/Civilization, Latin American Studies.

3. Minimum Curriculum--According to 510 IAC 4-2-5, Section 5,4,6, the minimum curriculum for any high school must include eight social studies credits offered by the school, with a minimum of four offered each year.

4. The ISTEP Program--The 1987 ISTEP laws described above were implemented through rules such as 511 IAC 5-2-1, which set the starting date for supplementary tests in science and social studies to be the 1988-89 school year and which prescribes testing in both subjects for grades 2, 6, 8, and 11. ISTEP testing replaced local district testing required by 510 IAC 4-2-1, Section 1,C,7, which had been instituted in 1978.

5. Time Allocation--In Section 2 of 510 IAC 4-2-3, established July 1, 1985, allocations of instructional time in social studies are stated in terms of weekly minimums. A minimum of 150 minutes per week is to be allocated for social studies instruction in grades one through four. In grades five and six, the weekly minimum is 225 minutes. In junior high (grades seven and eight) the minimum is 200 minutes. In both elementary and junior high, the social studies/citizenship curriculum is to "provide a balanced study of history, geography, economics, world cultures, law and citizenship responsibilities in a democratic society."

Guidelines Related to Social Studies

Guidelines are advisory suggestions prepared by the staff of the Indiana Department of Education. They are not mandated but are generally observed by local districts because they provide welcome guidance to social studies educators in resolving curriculum questions not addressed in laws or rules.

Guidelines can be divided into two types. Some department documents, such as social studies proficiencies and course descriptions, are reviewed and accepted by the State Board but are not encoded into rules. Other department documents such as Teaching About Elections in Indiana are offered to schools on a voluntary basis as useful supplementary publications.

Proficiencies. The social studies proficiencies called for in the 1987 law were presented to the field in June, 1987. The proficiencies for social studies were unique among the subject areas in that specific grade-by-grade objectives were included,

instead of objectives for primary, intermediate, junior high and high school levels. The proficiencies provide the basis for the state test in grades 3, 6, 8, and 11. They remain the single most useful source available to social studies educators for curriculum planning.

Course Descriptions. For each approved high school course title referred to in rules, the department has prepared a course description, such as the following for Economics:

> 130-24 Economics
>
> Economics should include a study of the allocation of scarce resources and their alternative uses for satisfying human needs. This course should examine basic models of decision making at various levels and in different areas including: decisions made as a consumer, producer, and voter; business decisions to maximize profits; and public policy decisions in specific markets dealing with output, employment, and prices in the national economy.

Course descriptions are accepted by the State Board, but are not encoded into rules.

Textbook Adoption Categories. In the year preceding a social studies textbook adoption, category descriptions are written and approved by the State Board which let textbook publishers know the nature of each course for which textbooks will be adopted. For the first time in the 1990 textbook adoption, the category descriptors were directly correlated with the previously established course descriptions.

Other Supplementary Materials. Over the past two decades, the Indiana Department of Education has published and distributed many curriculum supplements to be used on a voluntary basis. These include Indiana in the World (1978-1981), Teaching Social Studies to Gifted Students (1981), and Teaching about Elections in Indiana (1984 and 1988). Publications of this type provide many useful advisory guidelines.

Summary

The confusing array of agencies and statements which guide the teaching of social studies in Indiana can best be understood by cultivating a clear grasp of the framework of laws, rules, and guidelines prepared at the state level. Perhaps the most important and least understood influence on the social studies curriculum is the rule-making procedure. To fully understand the context for teaching social studies in Indiana and the possibilities for curriculum improvement, it is vital that citizens grasp the distinctions among and implications of laws, rules, and guidelines.

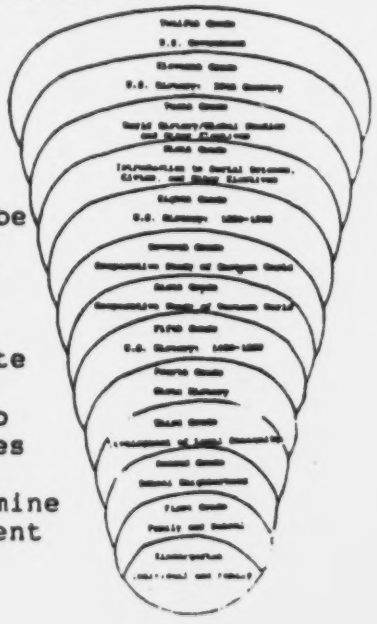
INDIANA'S RECOMMENDED SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

Mary Fortney
Indiana Department of Education

Indiana's recommended social studies curriculum, as presented in the section on "The Meaning of Social Studies in Indiana," is an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to teaching social studies content with the goal of developing thinking and decision making skills for responsible citizenship. The scope and sequence at each grade level reflect the position that thinking skills are best practiced systematically throughout the subject areas of the curriculum. In this way, students develop the ability to transfer thinking skills to other subjects in school and to life situations outside of school.[1]

The curriculum is intended to correspond to the "expanding horizons" approach which uses the child's environment and experiences as the starting point for learning about the larger world. However, the expanding horizons approach should not limit teachers to a narrow view of the individual, family, school, neighborhood, community, state, nation, and world. Students at all levels should know that the world is a set of interrelated systems rather than separate and unrelated "chunks" of territory. This point has been well stated by the National Council for the Social Studies Task Force on Scope and Sequence:

> The purpose of extending content outward, away from a self-concentric focus, is to illustrate how people of different areas depend on each other; how people are a part of interlocking networks that sustain the life of modern societies. . . .[2]



The expanding horizons approach is also intended to spiral upward, as well as outward, so that topics, themes, concepts, and skills are introduced and reinforced at more complex levels across the K-12 social studies curriculum. Students in grades K-3, for example, can be provided with opportunities to interact in ways that help them understand that individuals have both rights and responsibilities and fair rules are needed in the classroom so everyone has a chance to learn. While fifth graders participate in activities which help them to develop skills in cooperation and consensus building, they also develop an understanding of how the United States Constitution defines the role of government and protects individual rights. Older students examine the fundamental ideas of constitutional government

in more depth as they participate in the gathering and analysis of data, engage in questioning and debate of social and political issues, make reasoned decisions, participate in civic activities and take responsibility for their actions. In this way, the social studies curriculum introduces students to the principles of constitutional democracy at increasing degrees of complexity as it provides opportunities for practice of skills of citizenship.

Research Report

In general terms, research in children's developmental stages suggests that younger children benefit from instruction that provides opportunities for concrete experience, direct observation, and actual manipulation of materials. Older children may be ready to practice dealing with cause and effect relationships and the consideration of alternative solutions to problems and their possible consequences. Students in secondary classrooms should be ready to consider more abstract and complex concepts and relationships.

Practicing Citizenship Skills

Children do not automatically learn the skills of thinking/decision making and social participation unless they have had opportunities for firsthand, concrete experience at home or at school. Readiness skills in thinking and civic decision making must be taught systematically beginning in the early grades in order for children to demonstrate ability in their use at the end of an instructional program. This may mean providing background instruction in simple comparison classification, verbal and spatial relationships, oral expression, and small group interaction and cooperation. Students should also be given the opportunity to reflect upon their own thinking approaches and strategies and how they might be different from those of others.

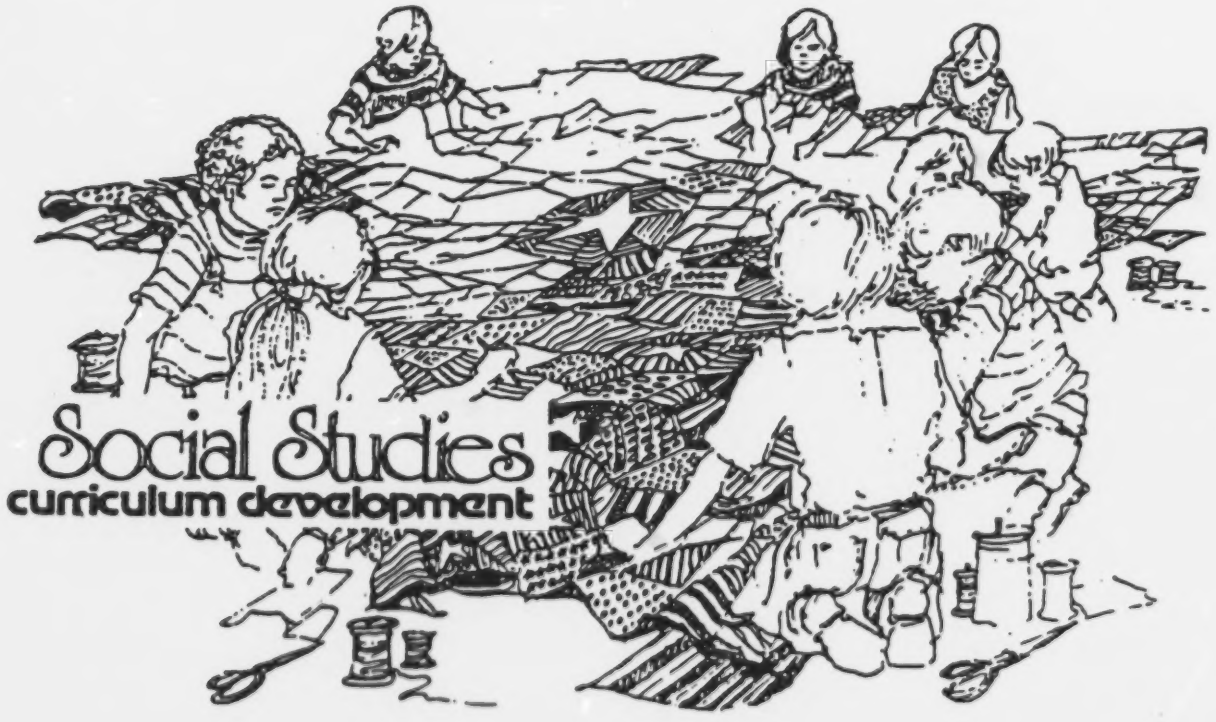
Evaluation of both Content and Process

Evaluation of student progress in thinking, decision making, and social participation is often not easily measured by paper and pencil tests. In addition to traditional testing

methods, alternatives which might be used include observation, evaluation of student products and group work, peer evaluation, and student evaluation of themselves. Information gained in this way can be used to continue the improvement of instruction.

The Best Social Studies Curriculum Meets Needs of the Individual

In individual terms, however, each child represents a different set of prior experiences, interests, attitudes, readiness for learning, and learning style or styles. While the social studies curriculum serves as a guide for instructional planning and the course descriptions provide topics, themes and general objectives, it is the classroom teacher who knows the needs of individual learners best. The following course descriptions have been developed by a team of social studies educators and have been approved by the Indiana State Board of Education. They are intended to be used along with the Social Studies Proficiency Guide in planning local social studies curriculum.



GRADES K-8: ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE/GRADE LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

Kindergarten

The goal of social studies education is the development of thinking and decision making skills for responsible citizenship in a democratic society. Children begin to develop these skills at the Kindergarten level by exploring their relationship with the immediate environment of school and the family. This is also the time they begin to develop an understanding of time and space relationships. Kindergarten students should be introduced to examples of diversity and change in their surroundings and should be learning to describe a sequence of events in a day at home and at school. They should become familiar with geographic relationships such as location (here, there, over, under), direction (up, down), size, (big, little), and shape. Children should be given opportunities to discover how people are similar and different and how people live and work together in families around the world. Kindergarten students should begin to accept responsibility for their behavior in school and to explain why rules are needed in families and at school. Children in Kindergarten should have the opportunity to manipulate a variety of media as means of gathering and organizing information. They should have the opportunity to learn through play and participation in large and small groups as well as through individual learning activities.

First Grade

At the first grade level, students should be given the opportunity to develop thinking and decision making skills through participation as members of their family, school, and neighborhood. They should be able to identify events and changes taking place in the school and local community and classify events as taking place "today," "yesterday," and "long ago." They should explore geographic relationships in their immediate environment, make models and maps to show locations of familiar surroundings, and recognize maps and globes as models of the earth. First grade students should have opportunities to discuss ways in which people are alike and different and how people around the world work and use resources to meet their needs. Students in Grade 1 should be able to explain why rules are needed in groups and apply rules to different group situations. They should have opportunities to practice citizenship skills through participation in a variety of group activities.

Second Grade

Students in second grade should be able to apply thinking and decision making skills within the context of the school and neighborhood. Students should be able to examine events and changes that are taking place in the school, neighborhood, and community and imagine changes that might take place in the future. Students should be able to identify local landforms and bodies of water. They should explore geographic relationships by making simple maps of the school and neighborhood. Students should be able to demonstrate that neighborhoods around the world are made up of people of diverse ages and backgrounds and explain how family and community members depend upon each other to provide goods and services, as well as for emotional needs. Students should identify the rights and responsibilities of members of the school and neighborhood and explain why communities have rules and laws. They should have opportunities to engage in problem solving and participate in the development of classroom rules. They should have the opportunity to manipulate a variety of means for gathering and organizing information.

Third Grade

Third grade students should gain knowledge and process information about their local community from a variety of resources. They should identify important historical events, places, and persons from the past and make connections with their present community. Following an orientation to their own community--its geographic location, human and material resources, major work and services, basic beliefs and values--students should begin to generalize their understanding of other communities in the state and the world through simple comparative studies. Third graders' understanding of history should be built upon by emphasizing continuity and change rather than dates and events. Concepts of time and space should unfold through such direct experiences as historic role-playing, interviews, study trips, and the construction of simple maps and charts. Through group work and projects, students should increase communication and decision making skills and build value concepts relating to responsible community citizenship. Skills to receive special emphasis include: using cardinal and intermediate directions and common map symbols; locating their community, major land and waterforms, and reference points on maps and globes; making simple generalizations about change (past and future) and the influence of geographic location; giving examples of the role of work, and how people make choices about economic wants and needs; giving examples of the diversity of goods and services; exploring the

heritage of their own and selected communities; and demonstrating responsible decision making and citizenship skills.

Fourth Grade

Fourth grade students should have the opportunity to apply their growing academic skills to an exploration of Indiana and its relationship with regional, national, and world communities. Fourth grade students are beginning to develop a more definite concept of time and can begin to deal with cause and effect relations and decision making processes, such as identifying problems and considering alternative solutions and their consequences. These skills and concepts must be related to students' lives and should be presented in a wide variety of resources and in hands-on activities, such as collecting and examining primary documents and artifacts, making models and maps, talking with community resource persons, and visiting historic sites and buildings.

Fourth grade students should be able to identify key events, places, and people which have shaped their state and region. They should be able to explain how changes have affected people and communities. They should identify major landforms, waterforms, and resources and explain how they have influenced state and regional development. They should be able to describe the basic structure of state government and explain its purpose. They should have opportunities to actively explore and appreciate the diverse cultures which have contributed to Indiana's heritage.

Students should also develop proficiency in working cooperatively in groups to collect data from a variety of sources, to draw simple conclusions, and organize data using graphs, charts, maps, and simple time lines.

Fifth Grade

At the fifth grade level, students begin a formal exploration of United States history, geographic regional studies, economics, government, current events, and cultural heritage. Students' increasing interest in and ability to gather and organize data should enable them to explore the physical and cultural characteristics of the United States and its neighbors.

Fifth grade students learn best when flexibly grouped for work and sharing so that they can express their opinions and become actively involved in "how to" demonstrations. Their natural interest in science, biography, and travel set the stage for experiences

involving maps, realia collections, simulations, educational games, group planned projects, first-person presentations, and school/community experiences. Fifth graders' interest in collecting and demonstrating uses of old objects provides avenues for extending time concepts.

In activities, emphasis should be placed on the problem-solving skills of questioning, examining fact and opinion, analyzing and evaluating sources of information, contrasting and comparing using primary and secondary sources, and conducting research using a variety of sources. Students should also be able to describe the major components of our national government and to demonstrate responsible citizenship in the classroom and school setting.

Additional proficiencies to be taught include: analyzing maps, globes and charts; creating and interpreting graphs; identifying relationships; debating issues; posing alternative actions; and developing critical thinking and independent study skills.

Sixth Grade – Global Studies: Western Cultures

In the sixth grade students should compare the history, geography, government, economic systems, current issues, and cultures of the western world with an emphasis on Western Europe; North, South, and Central America; Australia and New Zealand. Instructional programs for sixth grade students should include experiences which foster the passage from concrete examples to abstract reasoning, concepts, ideas and generalizations. Opportunities to develop skills should include the use of variety of resources and activities. Students should acquire positive attitudes regarding active participation, cooperation, responsibility, open-mindedness, and tolerance of others.

Seventh Grade – Global Studies: Eastern Cultures

In the seventh grade students should compare the history, geography, government, economic systems, current issues, and cultures of Asia, Africa, USSR, and Eastern Europe. Learning experiences for seventh grade students should help them to make the transition from concrete examples to abstract ideas, concepts, and generalizations. In-depth studies should provide greater understanding of environmental influences on economic, cultural, and political institutions. Opportunities to develop thinking and research skills should include reading and interpreting maps, graphs, and charts. Decision making and problem-solving activities should include

identifying problems, issues and questions; information gathering; hypothesizing; and evaluating alternative solutions and actions.

Eighth Grade – United States History: Development and Growth

Eighth grade United States History should emphasize the interaction of historical events and geographic, social, and economic influences on national development prior to the 20th century.

Special attention should be given to Native American cultures and the pre-Columbian period; colonial, revolutionary, and constitutional issues; early national formation; sectional divisions leading to the Civil War; Reconstruction industrialization, urbanization and immigration. Students should examine major themes and issues in U.S. history prior to 1900 and explore their relationship to modern issues and current events. (For example, anti-war movements in different periods in U.S. history, the influence of inventions and economic innovations, etc.)

Eighth grade students should have the opportunity to experience a variety of teaching and learning strategies. Students should practice critical thinking and inquiry/research skills by learning to use the media center and community resources to identify, evaluate, and use appropriate data and reference information. Finally, students should demonstrate through their studies a commitment to the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society.

GRADES 9–12: HIGH SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

At present the state of Indiana requires for graduation from an accredited high school four semesters of social studies. The requirements include two semesters in U.S. history and two semesters in social studies courses related to citizenship of which one semester is to be in U.S. government.

United States History: The 20th Century

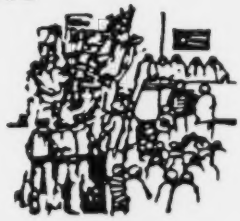
United States History is a two semester course which should build upon concepts developed in previous studies of American history. In this course, students should be given the opportunity to identify and review significant events and

movements in the early development of the nation. After providing such a review, the course should give major emphasis to the interaction of historical events and geographic, social, and economic influences on national development in the late 19th and 20th centuries. A topical or comparative approach can be used in developing certain themes from America's past as they relate to life in Indiana and the United States today.

Students should demonstrate the ability to trace and analyze chronological periods and examine the relationships of significant themes and concepts in United States history. Students should be able to sequence historical events, examine cause and effect, identify different perspectives, and relate historical situations to current issues. Opportunities should be given to develop inquiry skills by gathering and organizing information from primary source material and a variety of historical and contemporary sources, accounts, and documents. Investigation of themes and issues should include an analysis of the importance of cultural pluralism and diversity of opinion in American society. Students should be able to exercise their skills as citizens in a democratic society by engaging in problem-solving and civic decision making in the classroom, school, and community settings.

United States Government

The goal of social studies education is the development of responsible citizenship based upon thinking and decision making skills which allow students to gain knowledge, process information, consider the importance of values and beliefs, and actively participate in a democratic society. The study of United States government should help students comprehend and gain an appreciation of political origins and their evolution into contemporary political and legal forms.



In order to make effective political decisions, students must learn how to behave politically and must be able to comprehend the nature, location, and extent of political power and authority. A high sense of efficacy and the ability to demonstrate a commitment to active and responsible citizenship necessitates that students are able to characterize the constitutional structure and process of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the national, state, and local levels of government. Students must also be able to characterize different political systems and the role that government plays in the economy.

The student as effective citizen must also learn to analyze current political issues and to hypothesize about their impact upon the present and future. The student must learn that

responsible citizenship requires that each citizen make decisions and draw conclusions that are based on relevant data and on a variety of primary and secondary sources. The student must also learn that the development of effective inquiry skills undergirds a vital democratic society.

The following course descriptions are of elective courses which are approved by the State Board of Education, any one of which courses may be taken to satisfy the state requirement for a one semester citizenship course.

African Studies

African Studies should give students an understanding of and appreciation for the diverse peoples, cultures, and economic systems of the African Continent. The course should examine the early kingdoms and cities of Africa; early trade routes with Europe and the East; the colonization of Africa by European countries; African influence in the United States; the establishment of independent nations in Africa; and contemporary traditions, literature, art, and other cultural aspects.

Anthropology

Anthropology should broaden students' perspectives concerning life styles or patterns of culture among people. The study should introduce the anthropologists' processes of observing and analyzing human behavior. Topics should include: theories and principles of culture formation, growth, functioning and change; the relationship of culture to environment; and the relationship between cultural background and behavior.

Applied Economics

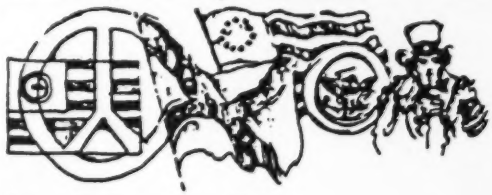
Applied Economics should investigate the specific economic effect of market forces and government policies on individuals and the major institutional groups such as business and labor in the economy. Special attention should be given to economic concepts and principles used by consumers, producers, and voters. Learning experiences such as projects, field trips, or computer applications are strongly encouraged as ways to demonstrate practical applications of economic concepts.

Asian Studies

Asian Studies should provide insight into the diverse peoples and cultures of Asia. It should offer opportunities to study aspects of culture in one or more of the Asian countries. Attention should be given to religions, traditions, art, literature, and the development of social, economic, and political institutions. Examination of contemporary Asian societies and the interaction of Asia with the United States should be components of this course.

Citizenship/Civics

Citizenship/Civics should be an overview designed to help students become independent thinkers and conscientious citizens. The course should deal with political behavior which students and citizens consider to be relevant to the most pressing issues of the day. The course should provide students with experiences which will develop citizenship attitudes within a framework of democratic society. Topics should include the process of policy-making; methods of public participation in policymaking, citizenship rights, and responsibilities in a changing society; and the relationship between modern society and government. The study of local government should be a component of this course.



Consumer Economics

Consumer Economics should provide the concepts and analytical tools necessary for understanding the functioning of the economic, political, and social systems and the ways in which they affect and are affected by the individual, the family, and other groups. Opportunities should be provided to acquire consumer management and decision making tools in order to understand the responsibilities and rights of individuals as consumers, producers, and citizens. Consumer Economics should help students to develop individual decision making skills applicable to such areas as budgeting, saving and investing, shopping, choosing a job, and being an effective citizen. The course should provide experience in using the communication processes among consumers, producers, governments, and other information sources. As a result, students should be prepared to participate effectively in the marketplace as rational decision makers.

Current Problems/Issues/Events

Current Problems should provide opportunities to apply techniques of investigation and inquiry to the study of significant problems or issues. Students should develop competence in recognizing cause and effect relationships; recognizing fallacies in reasoning and propaganda devices; synthesizing knowledge into useful patterns; stating and testing hypotheses; and generalizing based on evidence. Problems or issues selected should have contemporary historical significance and should be studied from the viewpoint of the social science disciplines. Community service programs, such as internships or other service experiences within the community, might be included.

Economics

Economics should include a study of the allocation of scarce resources and their alternative uses for satisfying human needs. This course should examine basic models of decision making at various levels and in different areas including: decisions made as a consumer, producer, and voter; business decisions to maximize profits; and public policy decisions in specific markets dealing with output, employment, and prices in the national economy.

Ethnic Studies

Ethnic Studies should provide opportunities to broaden students' perspectives concerning life styles and cultural patterns of various ethnic groups in the United States. The course should either focus on a particular ethnic group or groups, or use a comparative approach to study patterns of cultural development, immigration, and assimilation, as well as the contributions, of two or more groups. Such studies might also include analysis of the political impact of ethnic diversity in the United States.

Indiana Studies

Indiana Studies should be an integrated program comparing and contrasting Indiana's and the nation's development in the areas of politics, economics, and history. The course should utilize Indiana history as a basis for understanding current policies, practices, and state legislative procedures. Students should acquire motivation to participate in political actions concerned citizens. This course should include the study of state and national constitutions, both from an

historical perspective and as a current foundation of government. The examination of individual leaders and their roles in a democratic society should be included.

International Studies

International Studies should provide a survey of the formal relations among sovereign states in the international system, emphasizing the operation of diplomacy. The procedures for settlement of disputes and various methods of conflict resolution should be included. This course should examine power, interdependence, global development, and international organizations.

Introduction to Social Science

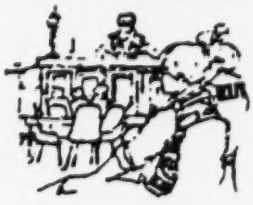
Introduction to Social Science should develop an understanding of the nature of the social sciences and present the reasons for studying them. This course should involve consideration of the social sciences as the study of humanity; consideration of the reasons for separate fields or disciplines; consideration of the objectives, materials, and methods of each discipline; and the difficulties encountered by the social scientist in applying the scientific method to the study of human life. Content could include group and individual behavior, education, social systems, and the role of the social sciences.

Latin American Studies

Latin American Studies should provide an understanding of and appreciation for the diverse people, cultures, and economic systems of Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean nations. Content should include environmental and historical factors which have influenced the contemporary situation. Topics of study should include pre-Columbian civilizations; European colonial system, and resulting institutions; independent governments; and current issues.

Law Education

Law Education should provide an understanding of the American legal system. Content for this course should be designed to promote an understanding of society and its system of laws by indicating how citizens may effectively function within the law. Ways of dealing with interpersonal conflict in order to secure constructive change should be included, along with the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Case studies,



field trips, simulations and mock trials should be used in the course whenever feasible.

Modern World Civilizations

Modern World Civilizations should provide an in-depth look at the twentieth century world. It should be a study of different cultures as they exist in the world today, including a comparative analysis of the various types of governmental, economic, and social systems. International relationships should be examined partly from the viewpoint of national interests, including the successes or failures of diplomacy.

Political Science

Political Science should provide for a study of the processes and goals of politics, techniques of government, methods by which decisions are made, and the basis for decision making. It should go beyond the study of governmental structure and functions to include an analysis of such topics as the nature of the American party system, interest groups, public opinion, laws which affect students, reasons laws are changed, due process of law, legal rights, and legal responsibilities. Comparative studies of governmental systems in nations other than the United States might also be included.

Psychology

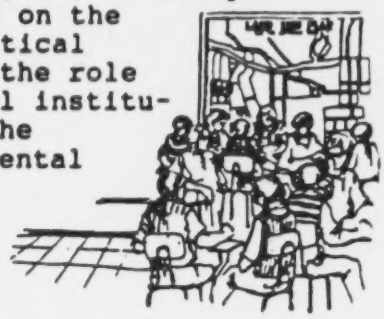
Psychology should provide an opportunity to study individual and social psychology and how the knowledge and methods of psychologists are applied to the solution of human problems. Content for the course should include some insights into behavior patterns and adjustments to social environments. The course should develop critical attitudes toward superficial generalizations about human behavior, respect for the difficulty of establishing the truth of a proposition, and a heightened sensitivity to the feelings and needs of others.

Sociology

Sociology should provide an opportunity for students to study group behavior and basic human institutions. Broad areas of content should include the study of institutions found in all societies, such as the family; religions; community organizations; political and social groups; and leisure time organizations. Moral values, traditions, folkways, the mobility of people, and other factors in society which influence group behavior should be included.

State and Local Government

State and Local Government should be a study of the function and organization of state, county, city/town, and township governmental units. Primary focus should be on the major factors and issues in the state's political development. This course should also trace the role and influence of various political and social institutions on a state's political development. The implications of this development for governmental unities should be discussed relative to current political and governmental situations. Field trips, observations, and interviews with state and local leaders should be encouraged whenever feasible.



Topics in History

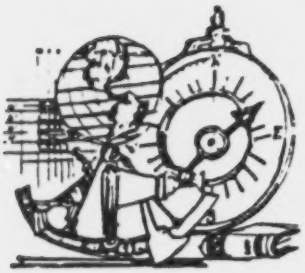
Topics in History should provide students with studies of specific historical eras, events, or concepts. The development of historical research skills using primary and secondary sources should be emphasized. The course should focus on one or more topics or themes related to United States or world history. Examples might include topics such as twentieth century conflict, the American West, history of the United States Constitution, or democracy in history.

Urban Affairs

Urban Affairs should examine the history, organization, processes, and distinctive aspects of urban centers. The rise of modern cities, and an analysis of modern urban problems should be dealt with in the course. The politics of governing urban areas, including the selection of political leaders and citizen participation in the decision making process, should be emphasized. Data collection skills may be taught in conjunction with the study of this course.

World Geography

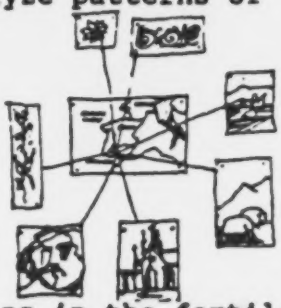
World Geography should provide an opportunity to study the interaction of humans and their environment in space and time. The course should help students understand the global patterns of physical and cultural characteristics such as earth-sun relationships, atmospheric and oceanic circulation, landforms,



climate, pollution, transportation and communication, economic linkages, and cultural diffusion. The study of cultural settings should also include political structures, life styles, customs and past events that have influenced or have been influenced by the environment. World Geography should provide the opportunity to study the five basic geographic themes (location, place, relationships within places, movement, and regions) as they apply to selected areas of the world. Regions selected for study will vary but should include examples from each continent. These studies should focus upon the relationships among regions and exemplify important geographic concepts or problems.

World History/Civilization

World History/Civilization should provide for a study of selected world cultures, past and present. Content should provide a basis for students to compare and analyze patterns of culture, emphasizing both the diversity and commonalty of human experience and behavior. The course should emphasize the interaction of local cultures with the natural environment, as well as the connections among civilizations from earliest times. Suggested general units are: prehistory, the Middle East, Western Europe, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, Asia, Latin America, and Africa. The course may be designed to focus on early world civilizations (including the rise of civilizations in the fertile crescent, Africa, and Asia, and the classical civilizations of Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America) or it may be designed to focus on a comparative study of two or more selected societies.



NOTES

1. Most of the introductory remarks are taken from the Indiana Department of Education Social Studies Proficiency Guide, June, 1978. "The purpose of the guide is to assist school administrators, curriclum specialists, and teachers in planning educational programs that systematically provide a climate for thinking, reasoning, and responsible social participation. The guide is intended to suggest long-term goals and objectives while it allows teachers and administrators flexibility in program planning and the opportunity to exercise their own creativity." 9.

2. Social Education (April 1984), 252-253.

SOCIAL STUDIES TEXTBOOK ADOPTION: RATIONALE, PROCEDURES, AND INTERPRETATION

James L. Barth
Purdue University

Introduction

Indiana is one of several states which adopt textbooks on a statewide basis. First, it guarantees that individual school corporations review their curriculum every few years. Second, it prevents a state official and publishers from making secret and dishonest "deals" which are unfair to competitors. Third, it guarantees a reasonably similar curriculum throughout the state. Let us explain each of these.

Updating the Curriculum and Textbooks

While it is obviously the case that teachers in all school corporations (or "districts," which is the term used in most states) should constantly examine their offering in each and every subject field and at all levels, this may not necessarily happen. It is tempting to coast from year to year, making use of the same textbooks until they fall apart or until the materials are obsolete and inaccurate. However, if all corporations in the State of Indiana, through the Department of Education--which is that part of the state government structure assigned to supervise education throughout Indiana--were required to participate in a process of examining texts, there would be less reason to hang on to obsolete or out-of-date curriculum.

Orderly, Rational, and Open Process to Select Texts

Now, what is meant by "prevent state officials and publishers from making secret, dishonest, and unfair deals?" Publishers are often large and economically powerful institutions. They have the resources to treat those persons who purchase texts in a most generous fashion. In the past, in many states, the publishers which managed to persuade text purchasers at either the state or local level to adopt once could often count on orders for many years to come. In effect, the buyers were bribed, competitive book publishers were locked out and an illegal and immoral situation was allowed to continue, often for many years. However, if there is an orderly, rational, and open process by which all publishers who wish may submit their texts to an examining committee every six years, then an illegal and immoral situation could not occur. Indiana has attempted to implement a rational and open process.

Finally, what is meant by the phrase "guaranteeing a reasonably similar curriculum throughout the state"? We must immediately acknowledge that some do not believe that a uniform curriculum is desirable. But most believe that it is important for all corporations throughout Indiana to have an accurate State Board of Education approved course description. If the State Board of Education wishes to do so, it can approve texts which, while they are somewhat different, fit the same approved course description. This then guarantees that there will be a degree of uniformity across corporations and in different parts of the state, thus providing approximately the same course state wide.

For these reasons, then, Indiana employs a state adoption procedure. Let us now see how it works and what it means to you as a teacher.

How Does Statewide Adoption Work?

The state textbook adoption process is complex. Rather than paraphrase the Indiana code, we shall simply reproduce the relevant section, adopted by the Indiana General Assembly and put in force in 1984.

SECTION 1. IC20-19.1-9-1 is amended to read as follows:

(a) The State Board of Education shall adopt textbooks and enter into contracts with publishers to furnish these textbooks at fixed prices. For each subject for which credit is given in the public schools and for each grade the Board shall adopt as many textbooks as it finds are satisfactory. These contracts shall be for a period of six (6) years. The Board in its call for bids may make an exception and exempt a certain textbook category or categories in nonrequired subject matter areas from being bid.

(b) If a textbook

(1) was adopted by the State Board of Education as its last regular adoption of textbooks for that subject, or was adopted by the Board [under section 5 or 6 of this chapter] within the last six (6) years; and

(2) the publisher does not submit a bid proposal for that textbook at the next regular adoption of textbooks for that subject, a school corporation may continue to use that textbook unless the Board finds that the textbook is no longer satisfactory. This subsection does not require a publisher to submit a bid or enter into a contract for the continued sale of such a textbook. A textbook whose continued use is authorized by this subsection may be used for a maximum of six (6) years after the expiration of its original adoption.

SECTION 2. IC20-10.2-9-5 is amended to read as follows: Sec. 5. The State Board of Education may, at any time, make additional adoptions as new textbooks become available or as waivers are granted under section 27 of this chapter. A contract for a textbook that was adopted after regular adoption shall expire at the same time as contracts which were entered into at the regular time for adoptions of textbooks in that subject.

SECTION 3. IC20-10.1-9-6 is amended to read as follows: Sec. 6. Whenever a new subject is to be taught in any grade, the State Board of Education shall, at its next adoption meeting, adopt and contract for textbooks for that subject and grade. A contract entered into under this section shall extend only for the period of time required for its expiration to coincide with the expiration of contracts for other subjects in the same classification.

SECTION 4. IC20-10.1-9-8 is amended to read as follows: Sec. 8. The State Board of Education shall accept sealed bids from publishers who wish to have their textbooks adopted under this chapter. A bid shall state the exact price at which each textbook would be furnished, and every bid shall be accompanied by specimen copies of every textbook proposed and by an affidavit. The bidder shall state in the affidavit that:

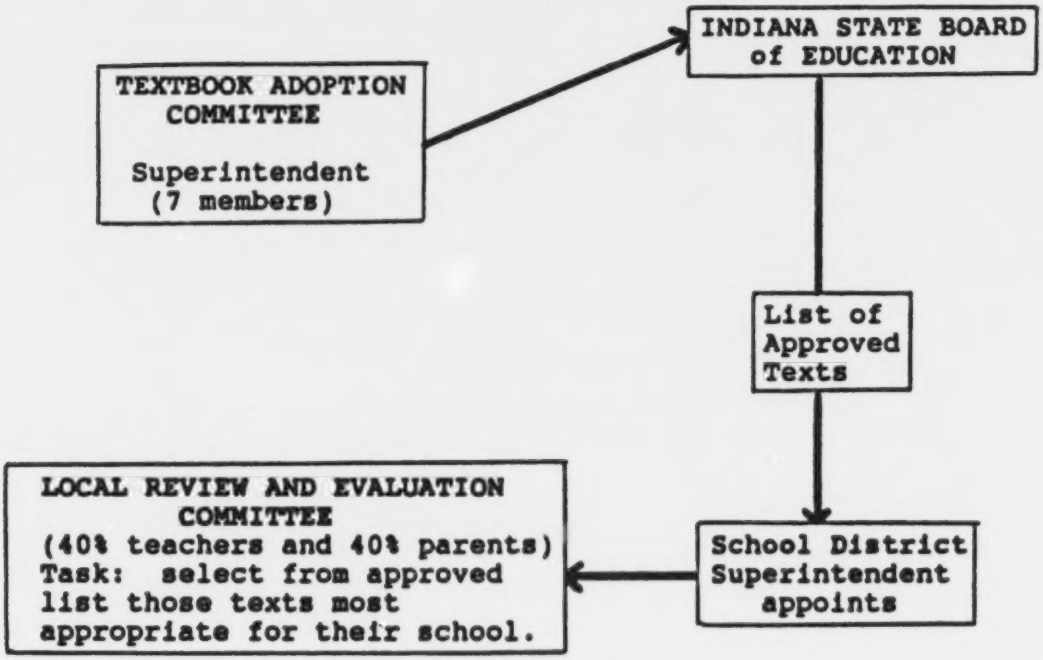
(1) he is not connected in any way with any other publisher bidding at the same time.

In brief, this section first stipulates under what conditions bids by publishers shall be submitted. It states that a contract lasts for six years. It specifies how to handle new subjects introduced into the Indiana curriculum. It stipulates certain conditions designed to make the bid submission process honest and aboveboard. It then details the process by which adopted texts are to be known to the public at large and to school corporations. Finally, it discusses waivers or means by which, for a proper purpose, individual school corporations may be excused from adhering strictly to the requirements.

Procedures for Adopting Textbooks

The procedure begins with the mandate that the State Board shall ". . . fully examine such books as are submitted for approval . . . taking into consideration the amount and quality of materials, subject matter/style of binding, mechanical execution and price." With the advice of the Advisory Committee on Textbook Adoption--a body appointed and chaired by the State Superintendent or his/her designee and containing seven members--the State Board of Education has legal responsibility for adopting

as many textbooks as it finds satisfactory. The titles of these texts are sent to the superintendent of each school system. That superintendent is then obligated to set up a review and evaluation committee of at least 40% teachers and 40% parents. This committee will select from the approved list those texts which in its judgment are most appropriate.


INDIANA STATE BOARD of EDUCATION
TEXTBOOK ADOPTION COMMITTEE
Superintendent (7 members)
List of Approved Texts
School District Superintendent appoints
LOCAL REVIEW AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE
(40% teachers and 40% parents)
Task: select from approved list those texts most appropriate for their school.

What Does This Procedure Mean for Classroom Teachers?

First, this procedure means that every six years teachers and parents may have the opportunity to reconsider materials that have been used in the subjects taught. Second, it means that the local review and evaluation committee is required to purchase materials from the approved adoption lists unless a waiver is filed and approved. Third, it means that there is an obligation to purchase texts at each grade level, from K-12. However, please note that there is considerable flexibility in choosing from among the texts on the approved list. The committee can recommend that the school system purchase one text for each student in every social studies class offered within that system. For example, all students in the fourth grade in a given school corporation would use the same social studies text on Indiana history. And each high school student in U.S. history would have the same American history text. But there are other alternatives.

Multi-Text Adoption: You Are Not Locked Into One Textbook

Suppose teachers from different schools within a given system decide upon three different texts from the list of approved texts. The recommendation from the review and evaluation committee could then be that multi-texts be adopted. In effect, each separate school may make its own choice. It is therefore conceivable that different texts could be available in one school system or indeed one school.

Classroom Set

Let us take a brief look at another alternative. Suppose that there are 150 U.S. history students in a given school. These 150 are divided into six sections of roughly 25 each with each section meeting in the same room at different times of the day. The law requires that the adopted text be available to all students and this would then mean the purchase of approximately 25 copies of an approved text plus five extra copies for emergencies. Thus, the obligation to adopt and purchase a text has been met. But once met, the school is free to purchase any other supplementary social studies materials it wishes. However, the committee's alternatives are not necessarily related to the ones we have just described.

Waivers

There are also opportunities for special programs that may require unusual materials normally not included on an adoption list. Schools may then apply for waivers to use an unadopted textbook or even no text for a specific course.

Other Reasons for Textbook Adoption

Thus, in addition to the three broad reasons for the state adoption which we detailed at the beginning of the section there are three more of what might be called desirable by-products. First, the price of the texts on the approved list will remain as quoted for the length of the six year adoption period. Second, the State of Indiana possesses the legal means of coercing a delinquent school corporation into buying textbooks. Assume for a moment that there is a school corporation in Indiana which neither adopts nor purchases any social studies materials. In other words, they are flouting the law which requires that schools purchase texts for each subject taught in the curriculum. In such an admittedly hypothetical case the state may require the purchase of approved materials, thereby forcing the reluctant

school district to teach a required subject. Third, as you have seen, by requiring an advisory committee at the state level and a review and evaluation committee at the local level, Indiana has diffused decision-making power. That is, instead of delegating the power to adopt texts in a small and secret body, Indiana has declared that it wants public participation.

The rationale and procedures discussed in this section are not by any means definitive or complete. In fact, we must say that interpretations and procedures are changed from time to time by courts and by the General Assembly. If you happen to have a question about any aspect of the textbook adoption procedure, you should contact the following person:

Social Studies Consultant
Indiana Department of Education
Room 229, State House
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Every Citizen Should Have Access

PI BETA ALPHA
Indiana Gamma Chapter

Pi Beta Alpha is a national professional and honorary association of publisher representatives. The Gamma Chapter of Pi Beta Alpha is made up of publisher representatives serving Indiana.

As a professional organization, Pi Beta alpha has an eightfold purpose:

1. To foster high professional standards among persons in the publication and distribution of school books.

2. To give recognition to deserving people within the profession.

3. To create, on a national scale, better understanding of educational problems.

4. To facilitate the exchange of educational information.

5. To promote a social and fraternal spirit among book persons.

6. To assist and encourage existing educational sales organizations.

7. To work in general for the welfare of educational materials representatives.

8. To help the American people to appreciate a great educational asset--*the school book*.

Educational Materials Sampling:

One of the goals of the Gamma Chapter of Pi Beta Alpha is to establish an approach to educational materials sampling which would avoid unnecessary waste. The members of the Indiana Publishers Representatives would like to take this opportunity to respectfully call the attention to educators to this problem.

Examination copies are provided by publishers to enable teachers, supervisors, and members of committees to make their selections after careful study of educational needs and values. Because sampling adds significantly to the cost of doing business, and consequently to the price of materials bought by schools, any savings which can be affected will aid in the maintenance of price levels against the forces of inflation. Cooperation between educators and publishers in dealing with this problem will be mutually beneficial.

Directory of Publisher Representatives:

If your group or organization would like copies of the 1990 - 1991 Indiana Educational Representative Directory, please contact the secretary/treasurer of the PBA:

Ron Buses
3739 S. Creekside Drive
New Palestine, IN 46163
(317) 861-09771

FOUR GOOD REASONS

WHY PARENTS SHOULD BE ON

LOCAL TEXTBOOK ADOPTION ADVISORY COMMITTEES

1. It's the law! In 1975 the State Legislature amended the laws regarding textbook adoption. This revised law stipulates that every school superintendent receive advice from a committee prior to recommending books for adoption to the School Board. This committee, in the language of the law, is to be composed of professional educators and at least 40 percent parents.

   The law does not state *how* parents are to be included. School systems around the state have used various approaches. Some have determined that by selecting teacher representatives who are also parents, they meet the letter of the law. That is true, but probably does not meet the intent of the law.

   School systems that have non-teaching parent representatives may select them in any manner. Sometimes the parents volunteer, are appointed by the superintendent or principals, or are chosen by parent organizations. The parents then may have a role that is limited to veto power over objectionable material to total involvement and equal voting rights.

2. It works! Parents have been actively involved in the textbook adoption process since the 1975-76 school year in the Monroe County Schools. Each committee that has been formed since that time has included at least 40 percent parents. The parents have been selected by the Parent-Teacher Council (formerly PTA/PTO Council). Although principals have sometimes worked with their PTA/O presidents to identify parents, most parent members have been selected or volunteered within the PTC structure.

   The parents have been active, significant partners in the textbook adoption process. They have been involved from the beginning of the local process, have been invited to all meetings, have sample books available to them, and have an equal vote with teacher and administrator representatives.

3. It's good for professional staff! Parent committee members are genuinely interested in what is used as the basis of teaching in the school. Almost unanimously, parents approach the task with the desire to learn about the subject under consideration. They ask questions that assist the professional staff members to view the materials from a broader perspective. They bring insights about their children that are woven into the discussion. This sets a climate that is open and exciting.

   Occasionally, a parent representative brings significant expertise in a particular subject area. By sharing this knowledge with the committee, all members gain in the perspective given to the materials.

4. It's good for parents and kids! When parents, teachers, and administrators work together with regard to any school business, the benefits to the students are usually increased. This is also true of textbook review, evaluation, and adoption. The hours spent together in discussion and debate help build a rapport that overflows into other school-related issues. Parents and teachers both have a chance to see each other's point of view. The materials that are selected as a result of this process should be the best available within the limits placed on local schools. If the materials we select are the best for this community, that certainly is good for kids.

It's the law, it works, it's good for the professional staff, it's good for parents and kids. The participation of parents on the textbook adoption advisory committees has been positive and productive.

State-Wide Review of Textbooks

Mary Fortney
Social Studies Consultant
Indiana Department of Education

Approximately 300 teachers across Indiana are involved in the state-wide review of textbooks conducted by the Indiana Department of Education this fall. These reviewers provide their evaluations of textbooks to the Advisory Committee on Textbook Adoption. This committee consists of a chair person and six members appointed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Based on the information provided by textbook reviewers, Advisory Committee members make recommendations to the State Board of Education regarding which textbooks should be on Indiana's list of satisfactory texts. Local schools then choose texts from this list.

There are a number of advantages to state-wide textbook review as it is practiced in Indiana. The six-year textbook adoption cycle sets up a regular timetable for curriculum review and revision prior to the adoption year for a given discipline. The state-wide review itself provides for the participation of a large number of teachers from communities all across the state. State-level hearings and public review sites allow parents and other community members the opportunity to examine textbooks and express their concerns. Parents also have the opportunity to participate when books are being evaluated at the local level. By law, parents should constitute 40% of the textbook adoption committee at the local level.

It is also important to note that Indiana does not limit the number of texts that may be on the adoption list. All of the texts which are found to be satisfactory may be on the list giving schools a wider range of materials to choose from. This does mean, however, that local school communities have an important responsibility in evaluating texts and selecting the ones which best meet their needs.

Textbook Review Instrument:

Included in this publication is a copy of the instrument currently being used by state textbook reviewers. This checklist is a composite of a number of instruments and was developed specifically to meet state requirements. The first section of the instrument deals with legal standards based on Indiana state law passed by the General Assembly or rulings of the Indiana State Board of Education. Each of these standards must be met for a textbook to be declared satisfactory. Section II deals with evaluation criteria which generally reflect sound instructional practices. These criteria are explained in more detail in Section III.

While this instrument was developed for state-wide review, it may also be useful at the local level. It is not subject to copyright and may be duplicated. You may wish to use it as it is or adapt it to your own needs. As has been pointed out elsewhere in this publication, a checklist can be useful in deciding if a textbook meets certain general criteria. In making the final selection of textbooks however, in-depth examination and, in some cases, a tryout actually involving students may be needed.

INDIANA STATE TEXTBOOK ADOPTION SYSTEM
Social Studies
Textbook Evaluation Criteria, 1990

Due to changes in Indiana Code in 1984 and in 1987, state textbook adoption lists now contain all submitted textbooks that are determined to be satisfactory. In addition, the State Board of Education may recommend to school corporations as many as seven (7) textbooks from a category on the adoption list that the Board finds most satisfactory.

In order to assist the State Board of Education and its Advisory Committee on Textbook Adoptions in determining whether a textbook submitted for adoption is a "satisfactory textbook," participants will use the REVIEWER RESPONSE SHEET to report their evaluations. The response sheet includes a set of legal standards and a set of evaluation criteria.

In order to meet the legal standards, a textbook must be consistent with the guidelines provided by state and federal Civil Rights Laws, the Indiana Administrative Code, and the textbook adoption policies of the State Board of Education. All evaluation standards may not apply to all categories but all legal standards must be met in every category.

Throughout these documents, the word textbook refers to the following legal definition: *"'Textbook' means systematically organized, printed material designed to provide a specific level of instruction in a subject matter category." (511,IAC9-1-0.5)*

DIRECTIONS FOR TEXTBOOK REVIEWERS
Complete a RESPONSE SHEET for each textbook in the category you are reviewing:

1. Thoroughly review the textbook;
2. Carefully evaluate whether textbook fulfills each Legal Standard and the Evaluation Criteria.

SECTION I - Circle your responses as follows:
YES if the textbook meets this Legal Standard; or
NO if the Standard is not adequately met.

SECTION II - Circle your responses as follows:
5 if the textbook is EXCELLENT in meeting the Evaluation Criteria;
4 if the textbook is ABOVE AVERAGE;
3 if the textbook is AVERAGE;
2 if the textbook is BELOW AVERAGE;
1 if the textbook is POOR.

Give specific reasons for each NO, EXCELLENT, or POOR response, citing specific examples by page number if possible.

SECTION III - Circle your responses as follows:
YES if the textbook is Satisfactory for adoption or
NO if the textbook is Not Satisfactory.

Please cite the reasons for your recommendation.

A WORKSHEET listing specific examples illustrating Evaluation Criteria is provided to assist you.

SOCIAL STUDIES
REVIEWER RESPONSE SHEET
(Return this sheet to advisor)

Reviewer_____

Title of Textbook_____

Grade _____ Subject _____

Publisher_____

Advisor (circle one)
01 Phyllis Usher
02 Robert Fourhman
03 Norma Rogers
04 William Soderberg
05 Evelyn Mason
06 Priscilla Costello
07 Patricia Sparks

Category Number_____

Publisher Number_____

SECTION I

LEGAL STANDARDS

Each legal standard must be met (a Yes response) for textbook to be recommended for adoption.

1. The textbook substantively fits the Social Studies Category as described in the Policy and Procedure for Textbook Adoption. YES NO

2. The textbook provides a variety of learning experiences which facilitate the development of the skills, knowledge and attitudes outlined by the state curriculum proficiencies for the course and/or grade level. YES NO

3. The textbook is free of sectarian and partisan content. YES NO

4. The textbook promotes equal opportunity without regard to race, religion, color, sex, handicap, national origin, or age. YES NO

5. The textbook is durable and clearly printed. YES NO

6. The reading level is appropriate for the grade level(s) for which the textbook will be used. YES NO

Cite reasons for each NO RESPONSE:

Item #	Reason	Page #

SECTION II

EVALUATION CRITERIA (See Attached Worksheet)

	Excellent				Poor
1. **Social Studies Goals**: The textbook supports the attainment of the goals of social studies education as outlined in the Social Studies Proficiency Guide.	5	4	3	2	1
2. **Content**: The content is up-to-date and reflects current scholarship and practice in the social studies disciplines.	5	4	3	2	1
3. **Instructional Design**: The textbook develops clearly defined skills and concepts in a sequential manner.	5	4	3	2	1
4. **Instructional Strategies**: The textbook can be adapted to a wide range of learning needs.	5	4	3	2	1
5. **Format**: The physical organization of the student text is attractive, easy to use and of high quality.	5	4	3	2	1

Cite reasons for each **Poor** response:

Item #	Reason	Page #

Cite reasons for each **Excellent** response:

Item #	Reason	Page #

SECTION III

The textbook should be recommended as **satisfactory**. YES NO

Additional Comments

_____

_____

KEEP FOR YOUR OWN USE
DO NOT RETURN TO ADVISOR

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SAMPLE INDICATORS

	Excellent				Poor
1. Social Studies Goals:					
The textbook supports the goals of social studies education.					
Opportunities are provided for students to:					
- gather information;	5	4	3	2	1
- interpret and apply information;	5	4	3	2	1
- evaluate information;	5	4	3	2	1
- engage in decision making and problem solving.	5	4	3	2	1
2. Content:					
The content is up-to-date and reflects current social studies scholarship and practice.					
The textbook is based upon current historical evidence, geographical and social data.	5	4	3	2	1
Charts, graphs, glossaries, diagrams, maps, illustrations, photographs and captions are:					
- accurate;	5	4	3	2	1
- correlate directly with the textual material;	5	4	3	2	1
- enhance instruction.	5	4	3	2	1
The text incorporates primary source materials (letters, journals, newspaper articles, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
Bibliographic references are current and accurate.	5	4	3	2	1
The textbook accurately presents the perspectives and contributions of a wide variety of social and cultural groups.	5	4	3	2	1
The text is well written and appealing to students.	5	4	3	2	1
3. Instructional Design					
The textbook develops clearly defined skills and concepts in a sequential manner.					
Learning objectives are clearly stated for both teachers and students.	5	4	3	2	1
Definitions and explanations are clear and precise.	5	4	3	2	1
Concepts and topics are introduced in a logical sequence.	5	4	3	2	1

	Excellent				Poor
Major skills and concepts are reinforced throughout the text.	5	4	3	2	1
The textbook provides a variety of techniques for evaluating student progress.	5	4	3	2	1
Students have opportunities to apply concepts and skills in a variety of practical situations.	5	4	3	2	1
The textbook provides opportunities for students to develop research and study skills.	5	4	3	2	1

For example:

- map reading and interpretation;
- use of reference books, documents, and other print materials;
- use of computerized data, environmental data, community resources;
- interpretation of graphs, charts;
- organization and reporting of data;
- application of information to decision-making and problem solving.

4. Instructional Strategies:

The materials can be adapted to a wide range of learning needs.

Suggestions are provided for:					
- approaches to individualizing instruction.	5	4	3	2	1
- adapting materials to a variety of learning styles.	5	4	3	2	1
- remedial and enrichment activities.	5	4	3	2	1
- encouraging active student participation and involvement.	5	4	3	2	1
- organizing students to work both independently and cooperatively in large and small groups.	5	4	3	2	1
- using open-ended questions to stimulate class discussion.	5	4	3	2	1
- helping students to practice both inductive and deductive reasoning.	5	4	3	2	1
- teaching students to use inquiry skills by developing and testing hypotheses.	5	4	3	2	1
- motivating further student research of related topics.	5	4	3	2	1

5. Format:

The physical organization of the textbook is attractive, easy to use and of high quality.

- The text is arranged for convenient effective use.	5	4	3	2	1
- The text is clearly printed and attractive to students	5	4	3	2	1
- The balance in printed and graphic materials is appropriate for the age level of the students.	5	4	3	2	1
- Graphic materials (such as maps, graphs, charts, and photographs) are clear and lead to accurate interpretation.	5	4	3	2	1

TEXTBOOK EVALUATION - THE SUPERVISOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Mary Fortney

In many respects, social studies supervisors and classroom teachers have similar concerns about textbooks. For example, one of the most important questions that both teachers and supervisors have is: "Will these materials meet the needs of our students?"

In the past, textbook reviewers have attempted to answer this question in an objective fashion through the use of checklists and readability formulas. While checklists are useful as an initial screening device, they may not be particularly helpful in determining if a specific textbook will work well for the students in your school or classroom. Readability formulas, which are based on the number of syllables and words per sentence, also have their limitations. Short words and sentences do not necessarily mean that a text will be easy for students to read. The difficulty of a reading passage can be affected by many factors, including the number and difficulty of the concepts being introduced. The author's writing style and ability to inspire student interest are also extremely important.

Many textbook evaluators now recommend that teachers involve their students in hands-on evaluation of textbooks. One independent textbook consultant suggests that students in fifth grade and above can be divided into cooperative groups to compare different publishers' treatment of the same topic. This type of activity involves students in a real-life decision making process and illustrates that there may be more than one perspective on a topic.

In fact, this type of approach is probably something that good teachers have been doing for some time. Teachers usually depend upon their experience in working with a large number of students over a period of years to determine if material is appropriate or if it can be adapted to a variety of learning needs. In addition to teacher judgement, the systematic involvement of students in the evaluation process can produce important insights regarding which materials will produce desired instructional outcomes.

This leads to the next question that teachers and supervisors share: "Which textbook will best meet the learning objectives of our curriculum?" Ideally, prior to textbook adoption, teachers and curriculum supervisors have worked together to develop a curriculum guide which states learning goals and objectives for each grade level. This guide then serves as the basis for a number of educational decisions, including decisions about which textbooks and supplementary materials to acquire.

Classroom teachers usually focus upon the learning outcomes for their own grade level or for the course or courses that they teach. The supervisor, on the other hand, must be concerned about the sequential development of skills and concepts across several grade levels, often from Kindergarten to Grade 12. This may involve the review of textbook series or a combination of texts from several publishers.

In reviewing a textbook or a series for alignment with local curriculum objectives, the program content outline and scope and sequence of skill development provided by the publisher provides a good place to begin. A review of how content and skills are distributed across the curriculum, however, will not be sufficient. The next step in the review process is a check on how the textbook is designed to engage students with the content. What will students actually do as a result of interaction with the textbook materials?

Most social studies programs emphasize that students should be active learners rather than passive recipients of information. Texts should be examined to determine how they can assist in this goal. This will require a close examination of end of chapter activities and questions. Are all of the questions the low-level type requiring simply the recall or retrieval of information? While this is acceptable for some of the questions, there should also be several which require students to identify main ideas, to order information and to summarize. These are skills which must be introduced, developed, and reinforced over a period of time. The materials that you choose should provide support for teaching these and other important abilities across several grade levels.

Another aspect requiring in-depth examination is the use of primary documents, photographs, maps, charts, graphs and pictures. Are these items just "pretty" or are they closely integrated with the content being taught? Are students provided with activities and questions that require them to actively use these resources?

The textbooks you choose should provide the major support for your social studies program. However, it is probably not reasonable to expect that any textbook will meet all of your instructional objectives. A final important concern is the question of "What's missing?" Once you have clearly defined what a textbook or series of textbooks do and do not provide, consideration can be given to the kinds of supplementary materials and activities you will need to plan for. A good textbook can be a wonderful tool. But it need not be your only teaching resource.

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1 Connie Muther, "Networking News," Volume 2, Number 5, July/August, 1990, Page 1-3.

A DEPARTMENT CHAIR'S PERSPECTIVE

William C. Clarke

A department chair is usually both teacher and supervisor. Therefore, when it comes to textbook review some consideration will parallel each activity. There may also be some additional considerations that only concern supervisors.

Scattered around social studies offices one can easily find relics of many successful adoption efforts and a few obvious failures. A look at these can help with each new adoption.

Textbooks will either be what textbook companies tell us we should be teaching, or they will reflect current curriculum guides developed by professional teachers regularly updated and suited to the needs of a particular school setting. Some teachers would pick the book and write the guide after. That's like the student who writes the outline after writing the paper. If guides are not developed and current, that is the first task to which the department chair should attend.

When considering the text one must remember that the teachers now teaching may all be gone by the end of the adoption cycle. Some years ago we adopted a very inquiry oriented book that worked at first. Within two years a new staff was crying for a book with chronology, names, dates and facts. Try not to go with the latest fad unless you are trying to shake up your department. Check each book for the way it handles a particular subject, theory or controversy. Is it reasonably balanced? Or will staff have to deal with the balancing process. Can you count on that?

Books must be adaptable to various teaching and learning styles. A book a student cannot read will not be read. This seems obvious. Nevertheless, books are sometimes selected because of some special appeal to the teacher. Check that reading level!

Look carefully at auxiliary materials. On office shelves are books, records, transparencies, guides, workbooks, etc., purchased at some cost and never used. Can the book stand alone? How will the auxiliary materials be used? Are these materials teacher aides or crutches? Are they substantive or glitzy? Will the company and your school be willing to have in-service on their use or will they, as they often do, remain on the shelf for some enterprising teacher to stumble upon?

Another thing to check is the company's track record when it comes to post adoption service. Is there an identifiable representative who has or will be around for that period? What happens if in the fifth or sixth year you run out of textbooks? The person in charge of the bookstore in your school may help you here. Other department chairs may also be of help with this question.

If near the end of the review process you have two books of nearly equal value, check price and also check with other schools in the area. If a student can move from one school to another and pick up with the same book, the transition is so much easier.

Check the durability. Sprinkle some water to see what happens to that cover. Drop the book. Check the size. Will it fit in the student locker or basket reasonably well? Check weight. Will the student willingly carry that book home every night? Of course you will use parents in the selection process but why not set up a panel of students to review. Listen to what they say. Their perspective may not always be educationally sound but will give food for thought.

WHAT TEACHERS CONSIDER IN TEXTBOOK SELECTION

Evelyn R. Holt

The classroom teacher's perspective on textbook selection is different from either the department chair or supervisor. Similarities will exist in textbook evaluation as each evaluator prioritizes the qualities they consider important in a good text. However, the classroom teacher will be using the materials on a daily basis over the next six years, depending upon teaching assignments made by administrators.

What does a teacher consider when evaluating a textbook for adoption? The following are areas of consideration, though not in any particular ranking.

1) Content- Certainly content is important, but content is more than facts presented. Under content should also be such factors as critical thinking, decision-making, and all other aspects of a "good" social studies program. Scholarship and presentation is also important. How those facts are presented - in a challenging, thought-provoking way - must be of paramount importance in maintaining student interest.

2) Readability- Is the level appropriate to the grade and subject? Teaching seventh grade social studies from a text more appropriate to high school world history is difficult. Yet the reverse also occurs when a text may be more appropriate for 7th grade reading level when it is a high school text. One does not have to complete a readability scale, but one can judge on the basis of experience with students. Some publishers will note the text's readability level.

3) Illustrations- Whether pictures, charts, graphs, maps, timelines or whatever other illustration, all convey a message. Are pictures representative of women, racial and ethnic groups, religious minorities, etc.? Are the pictures stereotypical and are those stereotypes negative toward a certain group? Are graphs and charts too complicated to understand or too simple? Do the illustrations appear in the appropriate places in the text or must one flip from page to page to decipher the contents and show relationship to the printed materials? Are maps appropriate to the study and the time period? Do maps illustrate enough to be understood and are they clearly drawn? Are timelines showing a relationship of events or are events in isolation?

4) Support materials- Call them "peripheral materials," or "ancillaries," "supplementary materials," or "auxiliaries," the basic question remains: What goes with the textbook? Is there a teacher's guide or resourcebook? Are there worksheets or workbooks? If one teaches history or geography, are there maps and mapwork assignments? Some teachers desire a test booklet or, in our computer age, computer disks to use to create a test. Also with the computer technology, there are often interactive videos and computer exercises to help teach a lesson. Are there overhead transparencies? Teaching strategies and suggestions, enrichment activities and skill sheets are also useful. Basically, what is included in a set of materials? Teachers have limited time to prepare for classes, often having to prepare for several subjects in one day. How have textbook publishers sought to remedy the problem of limited time for the teacher?

5) Durability- As ridiculous as it may sound, how a book will endure the next six years is as important to some as the contents of the book. Purchasing

agents are reluctant to buy "consumable" or "disposable" materials. Often the hardback cover with sturdy stitching/binding is the only option open to the teacher.

6) Cost- This can be a factor to some teachers in some schools. Often the bottom line is financial. Many times schools will order only teacher materials and student texts, expecting the teacher to photocopy or duplicate materials for students. Classroom sets of workbooks or study guides may be out of the question if a school is hard-pressed financially.

7) Controversy- How is controversy handled? Are controversial topics avoided completely? Is there biased analysis or judgment? In an era of growing censorship, whether blatant or "closet," the handling of controversial subjects is very important. From the subjects of racism, abortion, AIDS or right to privacy as political issues, how books approach a subject - or omit a subject - is crucial to the consideration. Teachers often will hope to avoid controversy in the classroom by avoiding certain topics, but does that give a true perspective of the world? These topics are of concern to today's students. Can we afford not to teach about these topics in a world bombarded by such questions daily?

8) Organization- Is it a logical sequence of development? Does one skill or learning objective lead to another or does the text "jump" from topic to topic? Are maps and illustrations woven into the textual prose or do they remain in isolation? Is the skill development appropriate to the age group/subject?

9) Page layout- How does the text look? Is the page visually attractive? Are the illustrations an addition to the visual image or do they jumble up the page? How are the spacing and margins? Does this text encourage one to read or close the book?

10) Timeliness- How current is the material? Although some time will have elapsed between the text's writing and use, glaring time discrepancies should be clues to avoid the text. Some revised editions of texts only insert an extra chapter as an "add-on" since the previous edition. The editors have made little effort to update materials with new information gained. The problem thus becomes one of how teachers can supplement a new, already-outdated text, just purchased. One example of this is how to teach about the changes in Europe since November, 1989 when the Berlin Wall came down.

11) Usability by others- Several different teachers often teach the same subject. The problem for the selection committee then becomes one of choosing a text to be accepted by all. When making a decision on a text, consider if other teachers can easily use the text chosen for the particular subject.

12) State approved texts- Often these state approved texts are the only options allowed a teacher. Yet for an individual teacher and subject, these may not be the "best" ones. A teacher can choose outside the approved list yet they must complete a waiver form from the state justifying the choice made. Often the busy teacher will only choose from the already-approved list in order to avoid a perceived "hassle." The waiver form is often viewed as too much bureaucratic red-tape to complete in order to select an alternate text.

These factors are all considered at some point in the textbook selection process by the teacher. Importance of each topic will vary according to the one making the selection.

READABILITY FORMULAS: SOME WORDS OF CAUTION

Michigan State Board of Education, 1989

Providing reading materials at appropriate levels of difficulty has concerned educators for many years. Lively and Pressey published a method for measuring the "vocabulary burden" of textbooks in 1929. Another pair of early researchers examined 289 factors contributing to readability (Gary & Leary, 1935). Over time, investigators found that two factors, sentence length and word length, accounted for most of the variance in their analyses. On the beginning reading levels, word frequency lists were found to be useful. None of these researchers suggested that only the aforementioned factors contributed to readability. They simply reported that, in general, as the length of sentences and words increased, other aspects of reading difficulty such as the abstractness of ideas increased also.

From the beginning, educators and publishers were warned against the mechanical use of word lists and formulas for simplifying texts. Horn (1937) gave examples of the inadequacies of such devices for selecting and rewriting books in the social studies. Lectures on the appropriate use of readability formulas and lists of factors that influence readability have been routine in education courses in universities over the past 60 years. Numerous articles in journals have discussed these ideas repeatedly since 1929. Yet, in 1989, the reading level of a textbook is apt to be judged solely by the result of applying a readability formula.

Even more questionable is the common practice of artificially lowering the result of a formula application by making two or three sentences out of one. Not only is a series of short, choppy sentences boring, but it may actually make the passage more difficult to read because words are removed that give direction to thought, such as because, while, and nevertheless. The result is elliptical writing that young or naive readers have difficulty comprehending.

In the last 10 years there has been a notable increase in the use of computer applications of readability formulas. Some of the computer programs produce the results of several formulas from the same sample. Typically, formula results vary two to four levels. Because the variability among formulas is clear, those interpreting the results should understand the need to examine factors other than sentence and word length and word frequency lists. However, many educators have been averaging the results of the formulas. This is a poor practice. Neither using the computer nor averaging formula results changes the fact that there are limitations to readability formulas, and a comprehensive analysis should guide decisions on readability.

Factors Relative to Readability

For some time it has been known that readability cannot be assessed in a simple, mechanical fashion. Several factors need to be considered (Bader, 1979):

1. Reader characteristics. Background knowledge, motivation, and interest affect a student's ability and willingness to read. The representation of females, physically handicapped individuals, racial and ethic groups, and others who have been set apart is important; readers need to be able to make a positive identification with people in the text because this, too, can affect reading achievement.

2. Linguistic features. Vocabulary, sentence length, and complexity greatly affect reading difficulty.

3. Conceptual factors. The ideas presented in materials also contribute a great deal to reading ease or difficulty. Readers use the store of concepts they possess to understand new ideas. If they lack appropriate concepts because of immaturity or inexperience, they may not comprehend what they read even though they may be able to read aloud with apparent ease. Such aspects as concept density, abstractness of concepts, and inadequate concept development may affect reading ease or difficulty.

4. Referents. The use of pronouns such as who, whom, that, and this can contribute to reading difficulty when the referent is not clear or is delayed over two or more sentences.

5. Organizational factors. Writing that reflects a clear, logical development of subject matter and employs devices to highlight the organization of the presentation contributes to ease of comprehension.

6. Writing style. Although style is somewhat elusive to define, certain features of writing such as cohesiveness, appropriate metaphors, vivid examples, and word choice contribute in great measure to comprehensibility.

7. Learning aids. Because aids to learning from reading are usually employed by authors of instructional materials and because they may contribute to comprehension, attention should be given to their potential effectiveness. These aids include questions or tasks that direct the reader to various levels and kinds of reasoning.

8. Teaching aids. Instructional manuals, management plans, and tests are examples of teaching aids that might be included as part of an instructional package. These should be examined with regard to ease of use, extensiveness, and quality.

9. Binding/printing/format/illustrations. Pictures, charts, graphs, and other illustrations may contribute to interest as well as clarification of the text. Typeface and format are factors that may influence text appeal.

The Controversy Over Easy Versus Challenging Books

Teachers often claim that textbooks are too difficult for their students to read. Educational critics charge that books have been made too easy. Words such as "dummied down" have been used to describe books that are not challenging. Where does the truth lie?

In classrooms across the nation there are numerous youngsters with low reading abilities. They are not likely to become better readers by being forced to read materials far too difficult for them, nor can they acquire information from extremely difficult books. Teachers have to compensate by using supplemental, ancillary materials and by using approaches to instruction whereby students discuss and write about first-hand experiences related to the topics being studied.

Likewise, in every class there will probably be some students who know more than others on a given topic and have excellent reading abilities.

These students, too, should be provided with supplemental, ancillary materials to expand their knowledge. With the range of abilities in most classrooms, it is unlikely that one book can ever be suitable to all students.

The textbook should be one that the majority of students can comprehend. Thus, teachers must be aware of their students' abilities.

The Major Problem With Readability

Aside from the short, choppy sentences resulting from attempts to tamper with readability formulas, the major problem with readability of social studies textbooks is that too many undeveloped ideas are presented, which results in writing that is fragmented. The encyclopedic treatment of ideas prevents the reader from seeing major events unfold in all of their complexity and drama. There is little or no description, story, emotion, or interpretation. The material is not appealing, interesting, or comprehensible to the students, even those who have basic reading skills.

Implications

The abilities of the students for whom a book is intended, the goals of the curriculum, the ideas presented in a book, and the quality of writing are all factors to consider in choosing a textbook. Although it is axiomatic that students will be unable to learn from information they cannot comprehend, students can stretch their abilities to some degree when material is presented in a clear, concise, lively manner. Conversely, students can sustain their interest more easily in material that is not written at a high level of difficulty. Given the complexity of the interactions among the reader, the textbook, and the curriculum, educators must select textbooks that are suitable to their own settings, rather than depend on a formula or a checklist that has been imposed on them.

Teachers need to relate textbook selection to their students' range of abilities. They need to focus on textbooks that teach a few important ideas well, rather than try to tell all about an area or age. Teachers must use supplemental materials to meet the interests and needs of a diverse student body.

Publishers need to develop textbooks that focus on well-developed concepts appropriate for the age of the intended readers. Writing should be crisp and lively, with reasonable attention given to factors such as vocabulary. The practice of distorting sentences to artificially lower the results of applying a readability formula should cease. Publishers should find consultants who go beyond checking readability with formulas to assessing elements related to student interest and the full range of factors related readability.

Everyone concerned with textbook development and selection needs to recognize some myths connected with readability and reading levels. First, reading levels designated numerically as fifth grade or eighth grade, and so on, do not exist. The term "eighth-grade reading level," for example, refers to the range of materials typically found in an

eighth-grade classroom that can be comprehended by an average eighth grader. Reading level is a convenient construct used to refer to relative degrees of difficulty. The use of a numeric implies precision that does not exist. Second, because of the range of abilities to be expected in cognitive and language processing as reflected in the normal curve, it is unrealistic to expect that all students in a given grade will read with equal facility. Everyone is not "average"! The "average" student is also a convenient construct. This means that publishers cannot be expected to produce one textbook that is suitable for all students at a given grade level. We can have a textbook, perhaps, that is suitable in terms of reading difficulty for most students, but in every classroom teachers will need to use more challenging materials for some students and less difficult materials for others.

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Adapted from Michigan Social Studies Textbook Study (1989): A Review and Evaluation of Selected Secondary Level United States History and Global/ Modern World Studies Textbooks. Lansing: Michigan State Board of Education, 1989, p. 19-23. Reprinted with permission.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR TEXTBOOK ADOPTION

The Indiana Department of Education makes a manual available regarding textbook adoption policy and procedures. Much of this manual deals with legal aspects that are of concern to textbook publishers. Some of the information regarding textbook adoption policies would also be of interest to school administrators and reviewers.

For information regarding textbook adoption law and policies or for a Textbook Waiver*Application Form, please contact:

Linda Dierstein
Textbook Adoption Coordinator
Indiana Department of Education
Room 229, State House
Indianapolis, IN 46204
(317) 232-9118

*TEXTBOOK WAIVER

The governing body of a school corporation may request a waiver from the adoption requirements if it believes that the educational needs of the students attending that school corporation can best be served by:

(]) adopting no textbook; or
(2) adopting a textbook that has not been adopted by the board under this chapter.

A request for a waiver must be submitted on a form approved by the State Board of Education, and it must be submitted to the Board before May 15 preceding the first school year for which the waiver is to apply. The Department of Education staff will review all waivers upon receipt and subsequently make contact with the publishing companies to secure additional copies of the requested textbooks for all advisors. The Board shall grant the waiver if it determines that the request is reasonable.

SUGGESTED SOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1989 DATA BOOK OF SOCIAL STUDIES MATERIALS AND RESOURCES contains the following:

analyses of basal social studies materials;
analyses of revised basal social studies materials;
short analyses of teacher resource materials;
brief descriptions of social studies curriculum guides of units;
publishers' lists of supplementary materials;
indexes

It may be purchased from the Social Science Education Consortium, 3300 Mitchell Lane, Suite 240, Boulder, CO 80302

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR COMPUTERS IN EDUCATION: EVALUATOR'S GUIDE FOR MICROCOMPUTER-BASED INSTRUCTIONAL PACKAGES: A pamphlet that provides evaluation forms and guidelines for computer software. It may be purchased from the International Council for Computers in Education, Department of Computer and Information Science, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403.

SOCIAL STUDIES REVIEW The Social Studies Review is a quarterly publication of the American Textbook Council, a national consortium to advance the quality of social studies textbooks and all instructional materials. Editorial offices are located at 475 Riverside Drive, Room 518, New York, NY 10115. Telephone: (212) 870-2760.

ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE FOR SOCIAL STUDIES/SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION (ERIC/ChESS)
ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) is a nationwide network of sixteen clearinghouses, each one specializing in a particular subject area. ERIC/ChESS monitors trends and issues about the the teaching and learning of history, geography, civics, economics, and other subjects in the social studies/social sciences.

Offering services to educators throughout the country, ERIC provides ready access to educational documents through its formation storage and retrieval system. Document information is reported in Resources in Education (RIE) and journal articles are reported in Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE).

ERIC/ChESS also offers a variety of services and products: (1) computer searches of the ERIC database, (2) a free newsletter, Keeping Up, (3) information reports in the form of two-page ERIC Digests and twenty-page Trends/Issues Papers, (4) ERIC Monographs that synthesize literature on important topics, (5) bibliographies, and (6) handbooks of teaching and learning materials for use in the classroom. Call or write the ERIC/ChESS User Services Coordinator for more information: 2805 E. 10th, Suite 120, Social Studies Development Center, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47408-2698. Telephone (812 855-3838.